

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

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INFO USCINCSO

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

AMCONSUL CALI

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 4445

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CO, CI

SUBJECT: DIPLOMATIC ASYLUM ISSUE-STATEMENTS OF COLOMBIAN AMB
TO CHILE

REF A) SANTIAGO 2606 B) BOGOTA 4050

1. COLOMBIAN AMB TO CHILE, JUAN B. FERNANDEZ, RETURNED TO BOGOTA
ON MAY 17. HIS RETURN AND THE STRONG STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO HIM BY
THE BOGOTA PRESS HAVE LED TO WIDESPREAD SPECULATION ON THE
FUTURE COURSE OF COLOMBIAN-CHILEAN RELATIONS.

2. FERNANDEZ, ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, COMPLAINED THAT
WHILE HE WAS ESCORTING TWO FEMALE ASYLEES, CARMEN LAZO AND JANINA
CADEMARTORI, TO THE PLANE AT THE SANTIAGO AIRPORT, THE WOMEN
WERE SUBJECTED TO VERBAL ABUSE BY THE CHILEAN MILITARY AUTHORITIES.
THE AUTHORITIES, HE STATED, SHOWED NO RESPECT FOR THE PRESENCE
OF AN AMBASSADOR.

3. THE AMBASSADOR IS ALSO QUOTED AS SAYING THAT THE CHILEAN
GOVERNMENTS POSITION ON SAFE CONDUCTS IS TO DENY THEM INTRANSIGENT-
LY.FERNANDEZ SAID THAT HE WAS AN AMB AND NOT WARDEN OF A PRISON
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FOR ASYLEES. HE STATED THAT THE NOTE-PASSING STAGE HAD ENDED AND

THAT IS WAS NECESSARY TO MAKE SOME CLEAR DETERMINATIONS. THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT, HE SAID, WOULD SHORTLY MAKE A DECISION ON THIS MATTER, AND THAT THAT DECISION WOULD HAVE INTERNATIONAL REPERCUSSIONS.

FERNANDEZ ATTRIBUTED THE SAFE CONDUCT PROBLEM TO THE JUNTA'S LACK OF A SOUND JUDICIAL AWARENESS OF THE RIGHTS OF ASYLUM.

4. FOREIGN MINISTER VAZQUEZ, WHEN QUESTIONED ABOUT FERNANDEZ STATEMENTS, POINTED OUT THAT THERE WAS NO RUPTURE OF RELATIONS WITH CHILE. HE SAID THAT HE PLANNED TO DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH FERNANDEZ. VAZQUEZ STATED THAT COLOMBIA WOULD CONTINUE TO UPHOLD THE POSITION THAT CHILE SHOULD GRANT THE ASYLEES SAFE CONDUCT. THE FOREIGN MINISTER HOWEVER, DECLINED TO COMMENT FURTHER ON PARTICULARS OF FERNANDEZ STATEMENTS TO THE PRESS. HE SAID THAT HE PLANNED TO SPEAK WITH THE AMB AND WOULD ISSUE A STATEMENT DURING THE COMING WEEK.

5. UNDER SECRETARY FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS, GUSTAVO GARCIA MORENO, IN A

MAY 20 CONVERSATION WITH AN EMBASSY OFFICER, POINTED OUT THAT FERNANDEZ WAS YOUNG AND RELATIVELY NEW TO DIPLOMATIC RESPONSIBILITIES.

GARCIA MORENO SAID THAT HE HAD NOT DISCUSSED THE FERNANDEZ MATTER WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER WHO, HE SAID, HAD THE MATTER UNDER ADVISEMENT AND WOULD MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS.

6. THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT COLOMBIA WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR FULL RIGHTS OF ASYLUM FOR THOSE PERSONS STILL IN THE EMBASSY AT SANTIAGO. FERNANDEZ STATEMENTS, HOWEVER, BOTH IN CONTENT AND TONE, FAR EXCEED THE FIRMLY STATED LEGAL POSITION ENUNCIATED BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER EARLIER THIS MONTH (REF B) AND IT IS HIGHLY POSSIBLE THAT HE WILL NOT RETURN TO SANTIAGO.
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